DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 113 033 PS 008 059

AUTHOR	Corbett, Franklin, Jr.
TITLE	Planning for Child Development: Handbook. Appalachian Child Care Project.
INSTITUTION	Georgia Appalachian Child Care Project, Atlanta.; Performing Arts Guild, Inc., Forest City, N.C.
SPONS AGENCY	Community Development Foundation, Norwalk, Conn.; Day Care and Child Development Council of America, Inc., Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	Jul 74
NOTE	36p.; For the Manual for this Appalachian Child Care Project Package, see PS 008 058
AVAILABLE FROM	PAG, Inc., 209 West Main Street, Forest City, N.C. 28043 (Paper, no price quoted)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.76 HC-$1.95 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS	*Child Care; Decision Making; *Early Childhood Education; Evaluation Criteria; Evaluative Thinking; Group Guidance; Guidelines; *Policy Formation; Problem Solving; *Program Planning; Self Evaluation; *Workshops
IDENTIFIERS	Planning for Child Development Package; *Project Appalachian Child Care

ABSTRACT

This handbook is a general planning tool for child development groups that want to be more effective than they are. It is designed to help a group determine (1) its reasons for existence; (2) its aspirations for improving child development programs in the community; (3) its limitations; (4) what steps it needs to take to achieve its goals; (5) who will carry out its initial project; and (6) the schedule of action necessary. The handbook also offers guidance in group self-evaluation, so that the group can determine (1) if the planned project is being carried out; (2) if it is being carried out to the group's satisfaction; and (3) upon completion, if the project fulfilled the group's initial expectations and if the group should continue to proceed with further projects. (ED)

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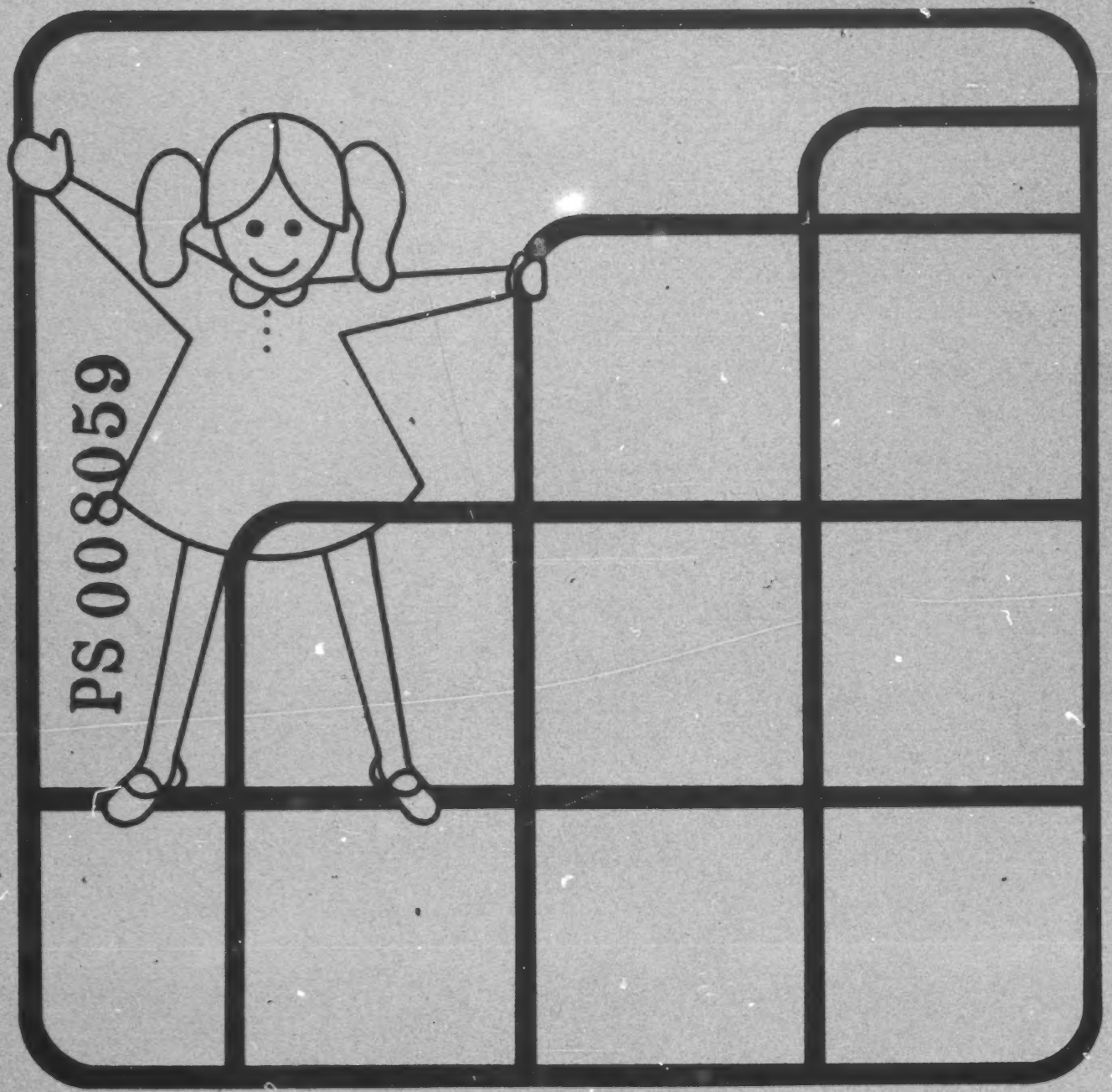
Handbook

planning for child development

APPALACHIAN CHILD CARE PROJECT



PS 008059

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PLANNING FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT

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Save the Children Federation/Community Development Foundation
Norwalk, Connecticut

Day Care and Child Development Council of America, Inc.
Washington, D. C.

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acknowledgments:

Georgia Mountains Area Planning & Development Commission
Gainesville, Georgia

Chatooga Community Improvement Association
Summerville, Georgia

North Georgia Area Planning & Development Commission
Dalton, Georgia

Rabun County Child Advocacy Committee
Clayton, Georgia

Toccoa-Stevens Child Development Center
Toccoa, Georgia

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209 West Main Street
Forest City, North Carolina 28043
704/245-1251

FIRST EDITION JULY, 1974 PRINTED IN USA

second printing March, 1975

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foreword

The PLANNING FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT PACKAGE represents a community development effort on the part of the Appalachian Child Care Project to produce materials for use with child care councils, policy advisory committees, and child advocate groups which want to become more effective in developing programs for children.

What follows is a step-by-step procedure for a group to plan, do, and evaluate a project of its own choosing and improve management skills in the process.

We asked a successful, rural arts council with strong local support and a background in children's programs to help us. We wanted practical, useful materials with a self-help emphasis. We are pleased with the results and hope they will be useful to you.

The PLANNING FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT PACKAGE is not only intended for use in rural Georgia, but as a resource for other child development programs in all of Appalachia and throughout the country where two or more people are willing to work together to make good things happen for children!

Thomas McClure
Resource Development
APPALACHIAN CHILD CARE PROJECT

WHAT THIS HANDBOOK IS

This handbook is a planning tool for child development groups that want to be more effective. It was designed in particular for groups concerned in some way with helping community child care centers, or who are working for child development programs in general.

The usefulness of this handbook depends on active participation by all members of the group. To achieve maximum benefit, the group should make definite commitments of time and place for a series of meetings sufficient to complete the entire handbook.

This handbook is yours. Write in it. Mark in it. Use it.

09606

BEFORE

DOING
ANYTHING...

00007

ASK YOURSELF →

(AND EVERYBODY ELSE)

WHY ?

HERE'S WHERE WE START

EVERY MEMBER OF THIS GROUP

LOOK AROUND YOU

LOOK AT EVERY OTHER MEMBER OF THE GROUP

THEN

ASK → **WHY?**

1 WHY DOES OUR GROUP EXIST?

A group always has a reason for existing, but you may not have thought over carefully enough the reasons <u>this</u> group exists.

It may not be as obvious as you think.

ASK YOURSELF

WHAT DID I THINK THIS GROUP WAS ALL ABOUT IN THE FIRST PLACE?

IS IT WHAT I THOUGHT IT WAS?

WHAT DID I THINK IT WAS?

HAVE I BEEN PLEASED?

HAVE I BEEN DISAPPOINTED?

WHY?

WHY DON'T I JUST GO HOME AND FORGET IT?

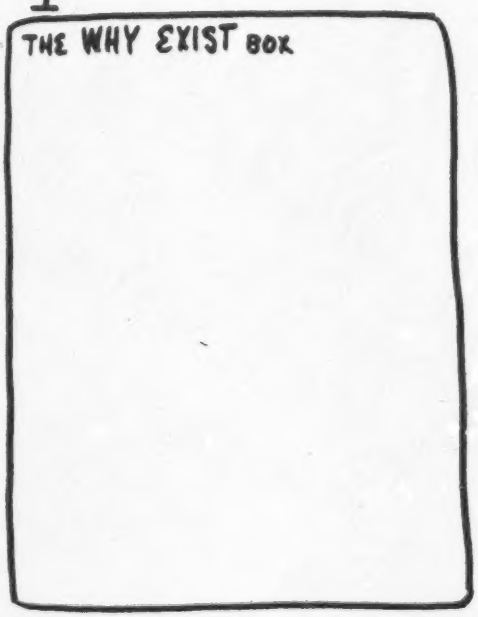
Go back to the previous page. In the empty box write down why you think this group exists.

You don't need to write much —a sentence will do.

BUT WRITE SOMETHING.

Start by writing "Why I think this group exists". Do this before reading the next paragraph.

1



The Helper will encourage you and all the members of the group to agree now among yourselves on a statement that says why this group exists.

When your group has agreed on a statement, write it in this box.

This will take time (possibly lots of time), but commit yourself and do it. It is probably the most important thing your group will do.

09011

YOU KNOW NOW WHY YOU ARE HERE

SO NOW

ASK → **WHAT?**

2 WHAT DOES OUR GROUP WANT?

Yes, we're going to try to get what we want, but before we can get it, we have to know what it is.

00612

The best way to do this is to relax, close your eyes, and imagine.

Imagine what you would like happening for your children, and for other children. What kind of activities, what kind of building, what kind of services do you see happening—that is, that you would like, in your "heart of hearts", to see happening.

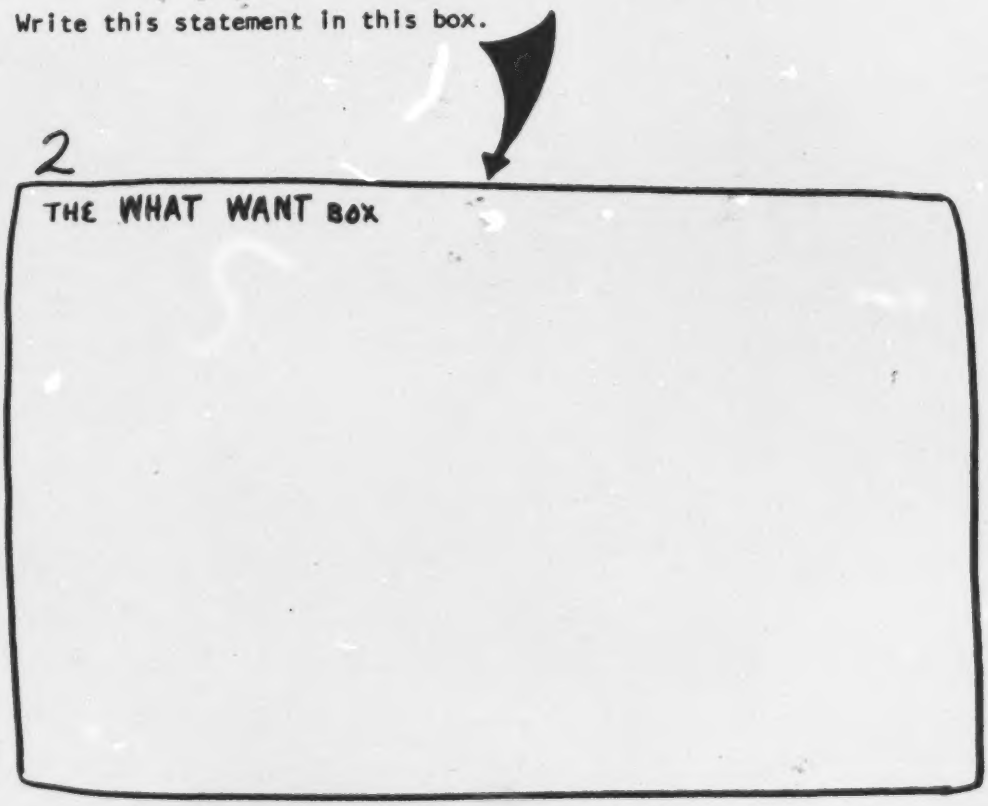
Ask yourself, WHAT DO I SEE HAPPENING FOR MY CHILDREN, OR OTHER CHILDREN?

After you have thought of what you want, write it down in the empty box on the previous page. You may want to write it down as a list of things you want. Start by writing "What I want to see happening for the children in our community..."

After you write down what you want, read the next paragraph.

Again, the Helper will encourage all of you to share with one another what you want to see happening for children in your community. He will encourage your group to agree on a common statement of what you want. It should be something everyone agrees to.

Write this statement in this box.



WHEN WE KNOW WHAT WE WANT

WE'RE READY TO START GETTING SERIOUS

SO

ASK → **WHAT?** ONE MORE TIME

3 WHAT CAN OUR GROUP DO TO HELP MAKE IT HAPPEN?

Getting serious means deciding what our group can do and should do to help bring about what we want

09014

Here's where you start to find out how serious you are about getting what you want.

ASK YOURSELF

> What needs to be done so that we will have what we want for our children?

For everything that you can think of, ask these two questions of it:

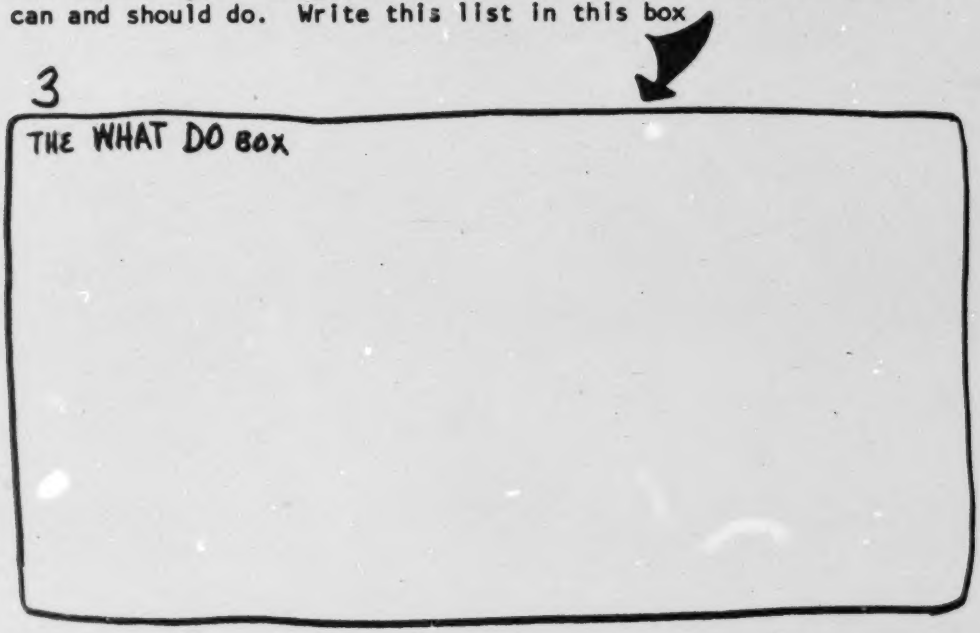
> Is it something that is possible for our group to do?
>
> and
>
> Is it something that our group should be doing?
> (meaning) Is it consistent with our previous statements about our group?
> (and too) Is it more appropriate for some other group to do?

Write a list of everything you think your group can and should do in the empty box on the previous page. Start by writing "Everything I think our group can and should do to help bring about what we want."

Then read the next paragraph.

Your group should now discuss among itself what it can and should do.

You should agree among yourselves on a list of things the group can and should do. Write this list in this box



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OK

SO FAR WE KNOW

WHY? { 1 WHY WE EXIST

AND

WHAT? { 2 WHAT WE WANT

AND

3 WHAT TO DO

AND THESE ARE GOOD THINGS TO KNOW,

IN FACT, NECESSARY THINGS TO KNOW

BUT

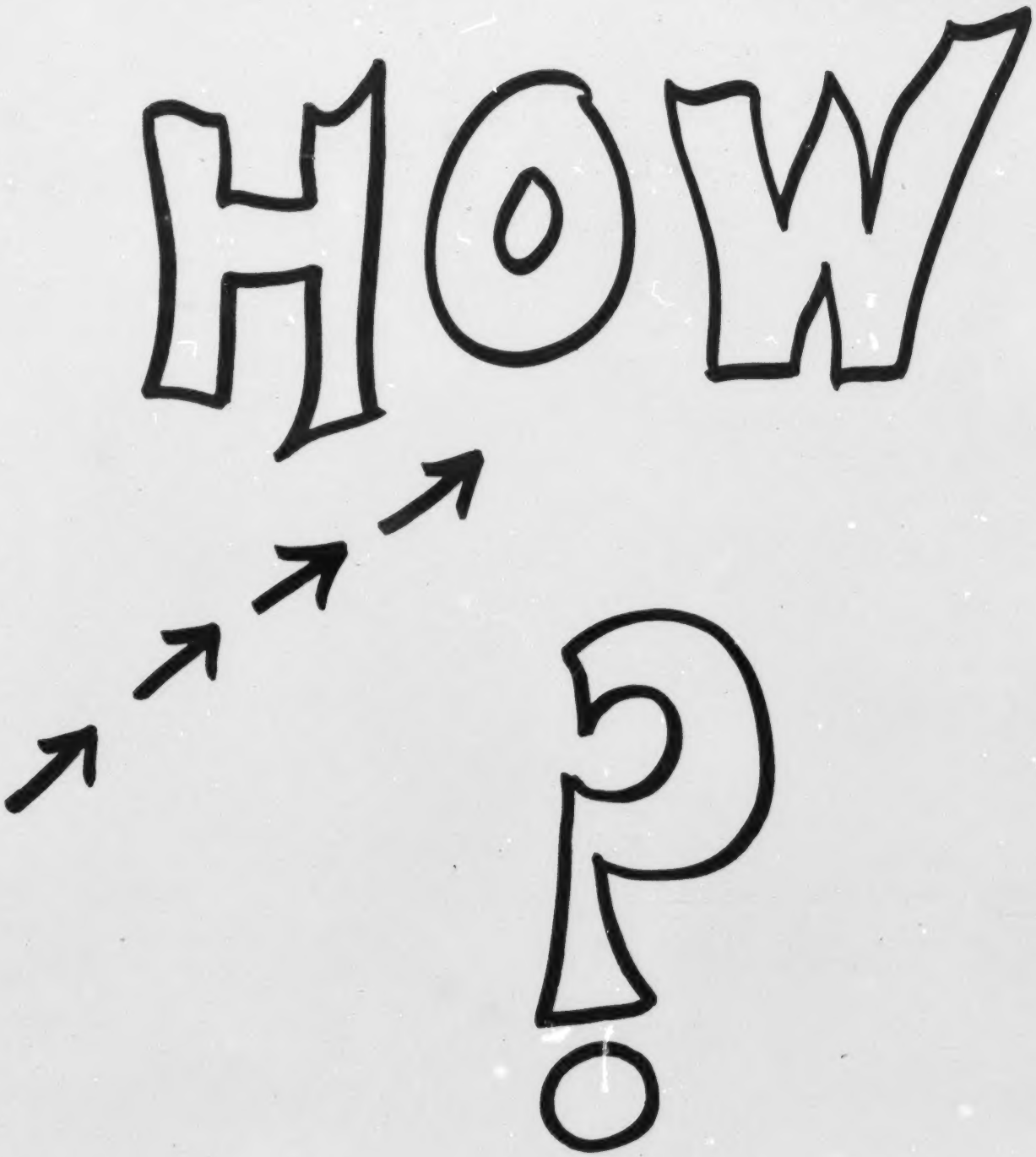
WE DON'T YET KNOW <u>ENOUGH</u>

SO <u>NOW</u>

WE NEED TO

ASK OURSELVES ↗

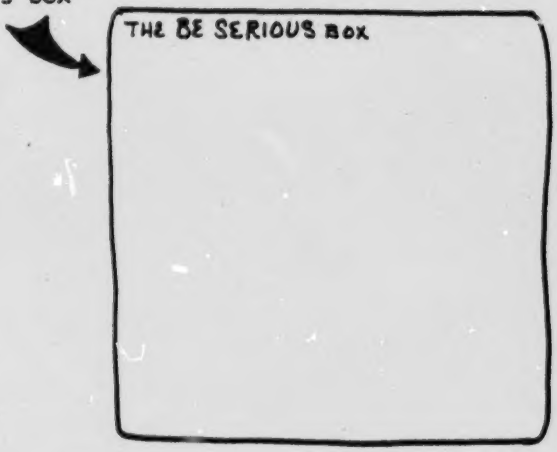
00016


HOW
?

Go back to page 11. Look in the WHAT DO box. It's a fine list, but simply having a list of what to do is not enough. We made that list because we decided to get serious about getting what we want. But getting serious is not enough, because we still don't have what we want. Before we can get what we want we have to decide to <u>be</u> serious.

And here is the way to <u>be</u> serious. Look over the list in the WHAT DO box on page 11 again. Together, as a group, pick out one item on that list that you would really like to <u>be</u> serious about.

Write that one item in this box



LOOK AT WHAT YOU HAVE DECIDED TO BE SERIOUS ABOUT.

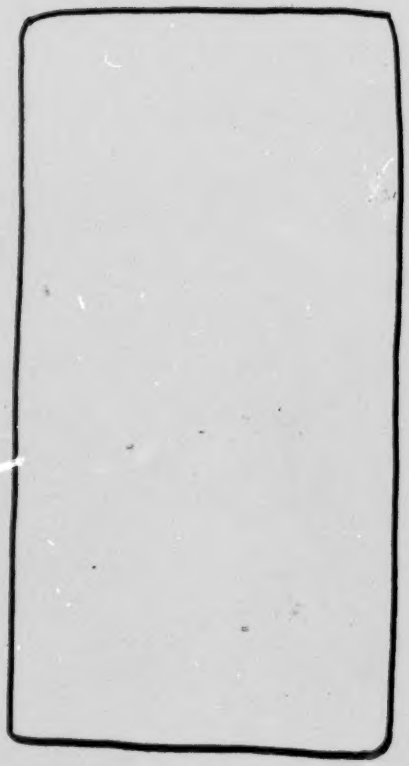
YOU ARE NOW READY TO <u>START</u> TO BE SERIOUS

SO

ASK → **HOW ?**

4 HOW DO WE DO IT?

"How do we do it" means making a list of all the steps we have to take to make happen what we wrote in the BE SERIOUS box.



First, try your own hand at making a list of steps you think will have to be taken to make happen what you wrote in the BE SERIOUS box.

4

THE HOW DO BOX

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.
11.

Now, discuss with the group the list of steps. Agree among yourselves on a definite list of steps in the order to be taken.

Write what the group decides in this box

00019

NOW YOU ARE BEGINNING TO GET A FEEL FOR WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SERIOUS.

BUT WE'RE ONLY BEGINNING.

TO BE REALLY SERIOUS

WE NEED TO

ASK → EXACTLY **HOW?**

5 EXACTLY HOW DO WE DO IT?

Exactly how means exactly that.

It means taking one step and thinking exactly how to do that one step, then taking the next step and thinking exactly how that step is to be done, and so on.

Go back to page 15.

Look in the HOW DO box. Notice step #1.

Write it down in this box

THE STEP BOX

Study the step you wrote in the STEP box. Close your eyes.

Imagine yourself actually doing what the step calls for. If it requires speaking to someone, imagine what exactly might be said. Run through the whole step in your imagination, just like a movie. As you run your movie in your imagination, notice as many details as you can about how everything is being done.

When you think you have a clear picture of all the exact details, write them in the empty box on the previous page.

Now discuss with the group the items under EXACTLY HOW. When the group decides on a common list of the details, write them in this box

5

THE EXACTLY HOW DO BOX (FOR STEP 1)

Remember this is only the EXACTLY HOW DO for the first step of what we decided to do. We will have to do an EXACTLY HOW DO box for each step in our HOW DO box on page 15.

00021

We are now <u>almost</u> completely serious about doing something to get what we want.

But two very important details still need to be worked out—before we can say definitely that we <u>are</u> completely serious about doing one of the things we said our group can do and should do.

TO GET THE FIRST DETAIL WORKED OUT

ASK → **WHO?**

6 WHO WILL DO IT?

When we asked you to think about exactly how to do one of the steps, we asked you to imagine yourself doing it. Now try to think who in the group should really do it. It might be you, or it might be someone else.

Discuss this with the group.

After the group has decided who will do it, write the name of the person, or persons, if there is more than one, in this box

6

THE WHO DO BOX

And now the last detail, but maybe the most crucial detail of all.

We could all go home now and nothing would ever come of all our decisions

UNLESS

WE

ASK → **WHEN?**

7 WHEN WILL WE DO IT?

If it needs to be done at all, it probably needs to be started right away. A decision needs to be made, and it might just as well be made now. Is there any reason to put off making the decision?

Write in this box when you think this step should be started and when it should be finished.

After discussing this with the group write in this box the times agreed upon for starting and finishing this step.

7

THE WHEN DO BOX

If you now go back and repeat questions 5-7 on blank paper for each of the steps in the HOW DO box on page 15, you will have a complete schedule of actions and deadlines necessary to accomplish what your group decided to do. Remember of course that you will need to adapt your plan to changing conditions.

00023

WELL!

You really ought to congratulate yourselves at this point, because you have now done everything (almost everything) you need to do BEFORE a group does anything.

It's time for a breather.

Let's relax and look back over what we have done.

WE DECIDED

1 → WHY WE EXIST

THEN WE DECIDED

2 → WHAT WE WANTED

WE THEN BEGAN TO GET SERIOUS AND DECIDED

3 → WHAT OUR GROUP COULD DO AND SHOULD DO TO GET WHAT WE WANTED

AT THAT POINT WE DETERMINED TO BE SERIOUS, AND WE DECIDED

4 → HOW WE WOULD DO IT

AND (BEING EVER MORE SERIOUS!) WE DECIDED

5 → EXACTLY HOW WE WOULD DO IT

AND (BEING COMPLETELY SERIOUS!) WE DECIDED

6 → WHO WOULD DO IT

AND

7 → WHEN IT WOULD BE DONE

OK!

THE BREATHER IS OVER

00021

We arrive now at the most (yes, THE most) critical moment of all.

And here it is

ARE WE ACTUALLY

GOING (TO DECIDE)

TO DO IT?

Well, there really shouldn't be any problem at this point. We know exactly WHAT we WANT done, WHO will DO it, and WHEN we want it done.

But common sense tells us that we can know everything we need to know, and still not ACT.

This is the point where the group is on its own.

00025

Let's assume the group is now DOING what they decided to do.

For those who are doing the doing, WHILE they are doing it, the next section should be helpful.

WHILE

DOING
ANYTHING...

00027

This isn't the easiest thing in the world, that's pretty clear by now.

So, every now and then

ASK YOURSELF

8 AM I DOING IT?

(REALLY DOING IT?)

None of us enjoy being our own taskmaster. It's called self-discipline or keeping one's nose to the grindstone. To do a job well, we have to be honest with ourselves every minute.

There may be parts of this job that we don't like doing.

That's OK.

All we can ask is that we stay honest with ourselves. We don't want to fool ourselves into believing we have done everything necessary if we haven't.

And don't be too proud to ask yourself

9 HOW DO I FEEL ABOUT THIS ?

Often we agree to take on a job that we really would rather not have had anything to do with.

OK, so now we're stuck with it, but that doesn't mean we have to like it.

It's much better to admit our dislike than keep it buried. If we bury it, we're likely to resent the whole situation.

Another thing. If ever you are not sure exactly how to proceed, or if you feel stuck in any way, don't hesitate to call on another member of the group for advice, encouragement, or both.

AND NOW THE THING IS DONE

Or, is it?

And, if it is,

so what?

Where do we go from here?

THESE ARE THE LAST THINGS WE NEED TO KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT.

00030

AFTER

DOING

ANYTHING...

00631

GO BACK to page 20 and re-read that part that says "You have now done everything (<u>almost</u> everything) you need to do BEFORE a group does anything."

There is one thing we do AFTER, for which we lay the groundwork BEFORE.

<u>AFTER</u> we do anything

we need to

ASK 10 DID WE <u>REALLY DO</u> IT ?

For example, we may decide to have an open house at a day care center. AFTER we have the open house, we need to ask "Did we REALLY DO it?"

Of course, we could say "certainly we did it." But remember, we asked, "Did we REALLY DO it?"

At this point someone might mention that "only" three people showed up. In this case, we might be correct in concluding that although we did <u>have</u> an open house, it REALLY wasn't a very successful open house.

Someone else might say that "three people was just fine." But was it "just fine?" How do we know if it is or isn't.

The best way to know is for the group to decide BEFORE doing anything what they will be happy with AFTER they do it. In this case, if the group had decided BEFORE having the open house that they wanted at least ten people to show up, then AFTER the open house the only honest way to answer the question "Did we REALLY DO it?" would be to say, "We didn't REALLY DO it as well as we wanted."

00032

On the other hand, if twenty people had shown up at the open house, there would then be good reason to celebrate, because then "We did twice as well as we expected!"

Now go back to page 14. Look at what you have in the BE SERIOUS box.

This is what your group decided to try doing.

Now try to agree among yourselves what you would consider a successful outcome.

Write what you decide in this box

10

THE REALLY DID BOX

	DID WE?	
	YES	NO

Remember that you want to put something in the REALLY DID box BEFORE you do anything, so that it will be ready for use AFTER you do what you're going to do. AFTER you have done what you wanted to do, be sure to compare the results with what you wrote in the REALLY DID box. You will then know immediately if you really did what you wanted to do.

00033

NOW THAT IT IS ALL OVER

WE SHOULD DEFINITELY

ASK 11 SO WHAT?

If we had to do it all over again would we do it?

You should look back over all the effort the group made in doing this thing, BEFORE, WHILE, and AFTER. Look again at the results. Try to determine just what sort of contribution all your effort actually made to the children of your community. You should ask, "Was it worth all our time and effort?"

09034

FINALLY

ASK 12 NOW WHAT?

Now that the group has done one of the things it said it can and should do, we need to go back somewhere near the beginning and re-examine the answers we came up with for the questions

WHY does our group EXIST?

WHAT do we WANT?

WHAT can we DO?

Are the answers still valid, do we still agree with them?

Or have we ourselves, and our group, been changed somewhat, by the experience we had of doing what we did? Do we now have a somewhat different slant on ourselves and our purpose?

If so, then we owe it to ourselves to ask the questions again, in order that our new understanding can be added to how we go about things in the future.

PLANNING FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT PACKAGE

credits

HANDBOOK AND MANUAL

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